

## NOTES FROM THE WEATHER BUREAU LIBRARY.

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## ORIGIN OF THE WORD "BLIZZARD."

In the third edition of Prof. Hann's "Handbuch der Klimatologie," Band 3, page 399, it is stated that:

Die grossen Schneestürme und Schneewehen, welche durch das Einbrechen der kalten NW-Winde auf der Rückseite eines Barometer-minimums zuweilen eintreten, werden in Nordamerika "Blizzards" genannt. Henry Ellis, der 1746 in York Factory überwinterte, soll dieses Wort für das dichte Schneetreiben bei kalten NW-Stürmen zuerst gebraucht haben.

The above statement that the word "blizzard" was used by Henry Ellis in the description of his voyage to

Hudson Bay was evidently based upon the following passage in Greely's "American Weather," page 222:

One of the first to mention the *blizzard* was Henry Ellis, who made a voyage to Hudson Bay in the ship *California* in the year 1746.

Gen. Greely's statement is ambiguous. He did not intend to convey the impression that the word "blizzard" was used by Ellis, but merely to state that Ellis described the type of storm now known as "blizzard" without calling it by any name.

As a matter of fact, the word "blizzard" is not known to have been used in a meteorological sense earlier than about 1860. Many efforts have been made to trace the history of this word in its meteorological application without success.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See in this connection MONTHLY WEATHER REVIEW, January, 1899, 27:18, and December, 1898, 26:562.—EDITOR.